

NORRIS (R. C.)

The Preston retreat.



THE PRESTON RETREAT.

PHILADELPHIA, April 28, 1895.

To the Editors of the American Gynæcological and Obstetrical Journal :

DEAR SIRS : I inclose a letter which I will ask you to publish in the next issue of your JOURNAL. The statements therein made are absolutely correct and capable of ready demonstration. I send the letter to you for publication, prompted by a desire for accurate statement of statistics. Dr. Price has at all times treated me with courtesy, and I am therefore not actuated by any other motive.

In your March issue, p. 340, I notice the statement of Dr. Joseph Price that "in over fourteen hundred cases at the Preston Retreat, not to speak of the thousands of cases in my individual practice, I have not resorted to the curette nor lost a case." I have seen a similar statement quoted a number of times but have never happened to see it directly made before, so that I have for the first time an opportunity of correcting it. Doubtless Dr. Price had in mind, when he made this statement, that he had had no deaths in the institution from sepsis. Since, however, his statement and not his intention has been printed, I think it incumbent upon me, in justice to past and future records of the Retreat, to call attention to the error. The mortality record of the Preston Retreat during Dr. Price's residency there is as follows : There were ten hundred and ninety confinements and two deaths in the institution, with two more deaths outside of it that should unquestionably be credited to it. One of these was in the case of a woman sent on the sixteenth day from the Preston Retreat to the Pennsylvania Hospital, where she died three weeks later, and it was found at the post-mortem examination that she had appendicitis and purulent peritonitis. The second death outside the hospital followed a Cæsarean section. The woman had been delivered once by Dr. Price, and a number of times during Dr. Goodell's incumbency, by the induction of labor, high forceps, and version. For her last labor Dr. Price determined to perform Cæsarean section, and for this



purpose the patient was admitted to his private hospital, where she was operated upon with a fatal result. The Preston Retreat enjoys a remarkable record achieved by the distinguished men who have had charge of the institution in the past—the late Dr. William Goodell and Dr. Joseph Price ; but to be just to other similar institutions it is desirable to correct the statement that there have been at the Preston Retreat at any time “thirteen hundred and thirteen consecutive cases without a death from any cause.”

Very truly yours,

RICHARD C. NORRIS.

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